

7 5/11/66

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation

SUBJECT: Valta RUPNERS, et al

1. This memorandum contains information available in the files of this office concerning persons, born in Latvia, who now reside in the United States and are probably naturalized citizens. These individuals are known to have some degree of ties, i.e., blood, marriage, close personal friendships, with residents of the Latvian SSR who, in turn, have been in contact with CIA, are known to have been exposed to, and are considered to be controlled by the KGB. While this office is not aware of any measures having been initiated to utilize these Soviet citizens for counter intelligence operations targeted against the United States, it is felt that such action could conceivably have been employed by the KGB.

2. Valta RUPNERS: Valta RUPNERS was the Subject of an unnumbered Bureau Memorandum, dated 1 June 1960, to our Office of Security. This report stated that a confidential informant of your office had reported that Valta RUPNERS was contacted by telephone in May 1957 by a Mr. RUPNERS from Riga, Latvia, who requested Valta RUPNERS to send her son, Ints, to Moscow and assured her that Ints would be returned unharmed. This she refused to do. Through a confidential source of this office, it has been learned that Valta RUPNERS received a letter in August or September 1960 from an I. RUPNERS in Latvia. It is believed that the Mr. RUPNERS mentioned in your Memorandum to our Office of Security and the I. RUPNERS who was the sender of the letter in August or September 1960 are identical with Ilmars RUPNERS, a former agent for CIA in Riga, Latvia, who is considered to be controlled by the KGB.

- a. Valta RUPNERS nee: ZAHNS, was born 6 October 1914 in Riga, Latvia. In 1937 she married Ilmars RUPNERS. Their son, Ints (or Ints), was born 6 May 1941. On 20 December 1950 Valta RUPNERS and her son, Ints, entered the United States as Displaced Persons from Latvia. Valta RUPNERS became a naturalized citizen of the United States on 16 April 1957 in Brooklyn,

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New York. She was issued Certificate #794206. The most current information available in the files of this office reveals that Felita HERNANDEZ is employed as a teller at the Yorkville Savings and Loan Association, 1640 Second Avenue, New York 28, New York. She and her son Luis were last known to reside at 193-28 39th Avenue, Flushing, New York. The parents of Felita HERNANDEZ, Peteris and Pauline ZAKINS, also were residing at this address. It is believed that they are naturalized citizens of the United States.

b. In providing biographic information to a contact agent of this office Felita HERNANDEZ gave as a character reference the name of Oreste HERNANDEZ, 7501 Ridge Blvd., Brooklyn 9, New York. It is believed that this Oreste HERNANDEZ is identical with the Oreste HERNANDEZ who is the subject of Bureau Memorandum, dated 5 May 1960, Bureau File Number 123-7908; CSCI 3/799,173, dated 16 April 1960; and CSCI 3/761,797, dated 7 October 1960.

c. Thomas HERNANDEZ, the husband of Felita HERNANDEZ, was born 11 May 1914. He lives in Riem, Latvia. In August 1954 Thomas HERNANDEZ was contacted and recruited for CIA by Leonidas Arturs BERENBERG, an agent of CIA who had been dispatched into the Latvian SSR in May 1954. BERENBERG reported to this office that he had provided Thomas HERNANDEZ with secret writing materials for HERNANDEZ' use in writing letters from Latvia. The meeting between HERNANDEZ and BERENBERG was subsequently confirmed by HERNANDEZ who maintained contact with this office, sporadically, until November 1957. At that time, HERNANDEZ requested that the contact be discontinued until such time as he could provide a new address since he planned to move his place of residence. To date there has been no further communications from him.

d. In September 1957 the Soviets announced, via radio and press, the capture and arrest of American Intelligence agents, one of whom was Leonidas Arturs BERENBERG. It is interesting to note that the

Telephone call that Velta HERNES received from a Mr. HERNES in Riga, Latvia, was made in May 1957 while the signature of BROCKENBRO was recognized by the Soviets in September 1957.

3. Paula and Lucile HERNES: Paula and Lucile HERNES are the parents of Ilse HERNES. Their last known address was 2902 Cortelyou Road, Brooklyn, New York, which is where they lived in 1957 when they appeared as witnesses for their daughter-in-law, Velta HERNES, at the time she was granted United States citizenship.

4. Albin SIEBING: Albin SIEBING was born 12 September 1906 in Ewert, Latvia. His last known address was 1394 S. Henry Street, Bay City Michigan. It is known that in 1955 he was in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he was seeking employment. It is not known whether or not he was successful in this effort. Albin SIEBING is probably now a naturalized citizen of the United States. In 1946, he lived in the French Zone of Germany and arrived in the United States as a D.P. in 1951. In May 1953 SIEBING was interviewed by a Staff employee of this office who did not use his true name, i.e. SIEBING. The interview, however, was arranged by a Staff employee of another office of CIA who did use his true name and CIA credentials. Consequently, SIEBING was aware of CIA interest. The interview was inspired by the fact that this office had learned that Albin SIEBING carried on a communications channel with citizens of the Latvian SSR. This office was interested in obtaining information on this channel from SIEBING.

5. According to the information provided by Albin SIEBING during the initial interview, his correspondence channel to Latvia dated back to 1946 when he was living in the French Zone of Germany. The correspondence was initiated by an Arthur KRAUTER, Riga, Latvia, in response to SIEBING's efforts to attempt to find out the whereabouts of his and his wife's relatives in Latvia. In the beginning of 1949 this correspondence channel from Latvia was taken over by a person who SIEBING identified to be Janka LINTS. SIEBING characterized Janka LINTS as being skilled in clandestine activities. According to SIEBING, both Arthur KRAUTER and Janka LINTS were conscripted into the Latvian Legion which was later integrated into the German Army. Upon the collapse of the German forces in Latvia, many of the Latvian Legion were taken prisoners of war by the Russians.

SIXTENSCH stated that he believed that is what happened to KRASTINS and LINIS. SIXTENSCH was of the opinion that KRASTINS and LINIS were acquainted with one another, had served in the same unit, and LINIS had persuaded KRASTINS to permit LINIS to take over the channel of communications for clandestine exploitation rather than to continue its use by KRASTINS as a means of mere service for personal information. Upon the entrance of Jenis LINIS into this correspondence channel, it became evident to SIXTENSCH that Jenis LINIS was still carrying on his clandestine activities. SIXTENSCH stated during the interview that he realized that he was in no position to assist LINIS and his companions in Latvia, did not wish to raise the hopes of his unfortunate countrymen, and was, therefore non-committal in his responses. When SIXTENSCH began to arrange for his immigration to the United States, he arranged with a neighbor of his in Germany to receive his mail from Latvia and forward it to him in the United States. SIXTENSCH explained to the neighbor that he did not wish to lose contact with his friends in Latvia. The neighbor whom he solicited to receive the mail was: From Olga DOER, Altburgstrasse 76, Berlin, Germany.

b. Continuing further with his discussion of the correspondence channel, SIXTENSCH stated that in November 1971 he received a letter from Ilmars KUPERS, Riga, Latvia. In this letter Ilmars KUPERS advised SIXTENSCH that Jenis LINIS had died as the result of a fall in which he hit his head on the pavement. KUPERS further advised SIXTENSCH that the correspondence that SIXTENSCH had received from Jenis LINIS was actually prepared jointly by LINIS and KUPERS. KUPERS indicated his desire to continue this correspondence. According to SIXTENSCH, Ilmars KUPERS had also served in the Latvian Legion and probably in the same unit with Arturs KRASTINS and Jenis LINIS. SIXTENSCH was personally acquainted with all three of these individuals. The correspondence between Ilmars KUPERS in Latvia and Albino SIXTENSCH was still going on in 1974.

c. In December 1954, and subsequent to the report made to this office by Leonida Arturs BERGERS, that he had recruited Ilmars HUPERS, Albert SITTINGERS was again interviewed by the first employee of this office who had interviewed him in 1953. The purpose of this interview was to obtain the permission of SITTINGERS to divert the mail channel with Ilmars HUPERS so that it could be utilized to receive clandestine communications from HUPERS. SITTINGERS agreed to this arrangement. He also wrote to his cut-out in Germany, Frau DORR, to provide her with an address to which she should forward his mail from Latvia other than the one she had been using which was his home address.

d. During the first interview with SITTINGERS he revealed that there were others, in addition to Ilmars HUPERS, engaged in clandestine activities in Latvia, apparently in collaboration with HUPERS. One of these persons was referred to by HUPERS as J. BERGERS and Jona SEBERS. SITTINGERS' was of the opinion that this J. SEBERS, also known as Jona SEBERS, was identical with Jona SEBERS who had also been conscripted into the Latvian Legion during World War II. SITTINGERS added further that Jona SEBERS had attempted to escape from Latvia to Sweden by boat on 8 May 1945 along with some other Latvians and that all of the group had been captured by the Soviets and returned to Latvia.

5. Gaida Marijane Priedite HUPERS: Gaida Marijane Priedite HUPERS was born in Riga, Latvia. She is now a naturalized citizen of the United States. HUPERS is the subject of Bureau Memorandum, dated 22 January 1960, Bureau File Number 105-81585; Bureau Memorandum, dated 16 May 1960, Bureau File Number 105-81585; Bureau Memorandum, dated January 1960, and CSCT 3/760,059, dated 25 May 1960. In 1959 Gaida Marijane Priedite HUPERS was a Guide at the American Exhibit in Moscow. During the time she was in the Soviet Union she visited Riga, Latvia, along with John Reed HONAG. While in Riga HUPERS contacted Jona SEBERS who, according to HUPERS, arranged for her and HONAG to see the city. HUPERS stated that SEBERS used two cars in order to avoid the surveillance placed on them during this tour. HUPERS said that she contacted Jona SEBERS at the request of Lucille HONAG, the sister of John, a Latvian-language newspaper published in New York City. HUPERS identified Jona SEBERS as the brother-in-law of Lucille HONAG. It is the opinion of this office that the J. SEBERS identified as Jona SEBERS, is probably identical with Jona SEBERS, the brother-in-law of Lucille HONAG.

6. Ernests SVETICS: Ernests SVETICS was born in Riga, Latvia. His last known residence was 904 E. 15th Street, Apartment 6, Brooklyn, New York. It is presumed that he arrived in the United States after World War II. He is possibly now a naturalized citizen. In March 1957 Ernests SVETICS was interviewed by a contact agent of this office in order to obtain information concerning a letter that Ernests SVETICS had received from his nephew, Vilads SVETICS, who lives in Riga, Latvia.

a. Vilads SVETICS has been an agent in Latvia for CIA and is considered to be controlled by the KGB. Ernests SVETICS stated to the interviewer that he had received a letter from his nephew, that the letter contained mostly news about relatives in Latvia. It also provided a street address in Riga which Ernests SVETICS should use when writing to his nephew. However, the letter was to be addressed to the name of S. KINGSBERG rather than to the nephew in his true name, i.e., Vilads SVETICS. Ernests SVETICS stated that he had replied to his nephew's letter according to the instructions and had used his true name and address in Brooklyn, New York, as the sender of the letter.

b. Vilads SVETICS was in contact with CIA, via secret writing letters and radio from January 1957 until the summer of 1958. It is known that he was also in contact with the British Intelligence Service from the summer of 1949 until late 1955 or early 1956 and with the Swedish Intelligence Service from early in 1949 until the summer of 1957.

c. It is also known that Vilads SVETICS was aware of Alberts KINGSBERG's communications channel to Latvia. The presence of Vilads SVETICS in Latvia and his resistance activities were known to Leonidas Arbutis KINGSBERG, the CIA agent who reported to this office that he had recruited Ilmars KINGSBERG and whose capture by the KGB was announced in September 1957.

d. Vilads SVETICS was one of the members of a Latvian resistance organization with whom the former British agent, Vitolds KINGSBERG, was in contact during the time KINGSBERG was in Latvia (1949-1951). According to information supplied to CIA by the British Intelligence Service, the British proved that the resistance organization to which Vilads SVETICS belonged was, throughout the operation, under the control of the Soviet State Security (currently, the KGB). Vitolds

HERKIS spent approximately 18 months living with this resistance organization in Latvia and was then exfiltrated to England, via Germany. The British Intelligence Service has stated that they believe that the Soviets permitted Vitolds HERKIS to return to England with the sole object of persuading the British to continue to send in their agents. The British are also of the opinion that HERKIS was not aware of being controlled by the Soviets during the time he was in Latvia as their agent.

7. Vitolds HERKIS is the Subject of Bureau Memorandum, dated 10 November 1958, Bureau File Number 71-3573, and CSII 3/756,529, dated 24 September 1958. He now lives in the United States. In November 1958 he was interviewed by a Staff employee of this office. HERKIS was shown a group picture of Latvians, one of whom was Viardis SYRIS. HERKIS identified SYRIS by true name and stated that SYRIS was one of the persons in Latvia who gave him operational instructions for the resistance organization during the time HERKIS was there as an intelligence agent for the British. HERKIS further stated that Viardis SYRIS was also known as HINSHINE and as JANEKOS. In an earlier interview with an employee of our office of Security, HERKIS stated that on 28 May 1958 his mother in High Point, North Carolina, had received a telephone call from a person who, as closely as his mother was able to remember, identified himself as Mr. JANEKOS. The caller made inquiries about Vitolds HERKIS and his whereabouts, claimed that he owned an airplane firm and wanted to offer Vitolds HERKIS a job as a pilot. HERKIS stated to the interviewer that he knew only one person who was named JANEKOS, that this person was engaged in airplane work in Latvia and that he could not visualize that person having made the call.

8. It will be appreciated if you provide this office with any information that you may have available concerning the persons named herein and with any comments you may consider expedient.

FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS):

CSII-3/762,805

SR/2/Baltic/Lat. [] g 5 January 1960

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References:

- Ilmarinen HUPKIS
- Atkins SINTERSONS
- Velta HUPKIS
- Vitalde HUPKIS
- AVCC/7
- Gaida HUPKIS
- Project ABCOE Ops files

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